Iron County Register

BY ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON, - - - MISSOURI

THORA.

I.

Thin and graceful like a clipper Thora was
from top to toe,
Though her dress was very scanty and perhaps not *comme il faut;*
Bare and brown her little feet were, and her cheeks were sunburnt, too,
But her lips were very rosy and her eyes were very blue.

One black skirt with red embroidery and a snowy white chemise
Were her wanted dress on week-days, when she felt herself at ease.
Hats she only wore in winter when with snow the air was dim,
But her eyes peeped forth full brightly 'neath the big sou'wester's brim.

For who thinks that a sou'wester, e'en if e'er and e'er so wide,
From the boys' admiring glances could a pretty maiden hide,
And 'tis known how such attention every pretty maid annoys;
And—it was a thousand pities!—Thora did not like the boys;

They were either rude and noisy, or too bashful and confused:
As for loving them! No, thank you; she would rather be excused!
And, beside, there were so many—stout and slender, short and tall—
How should she her choice determine, since she could not love them all?

Thus she spoke unto her mother, sitting in the evening's glow,
In the shadow of the fish-nets, which were drooping, row on row,
From their stakes; while to the westward hung the sun so huge and red;
Tinged with flame the white-winged seabirds, drifting idly o'er her head.

"Sooth to say, thy words are canny," said the good wife, with a sigh,
Glancing seaward to conceal the merry twinkle in her eye:
"Yet 'tis right young maids should marry; childless age brings no maid boon;
Beauty lost, in vain they hanker, fretting idly for the moon.

"Therefore, I will tell thee, daughter, what 'tis wise for thee to do;
One man, e'en if e'er so canny, never knows as much as two.
We will call the girls together from the valley's every part.
They shall choose among thy wooers him who is to own thy heart."

"Oh, what sport!" cried pretty Thora; "thanks to thee, my mother dear!
Oh, how gayly we shall chatter when no prying men are near!
Loved and cherished shall my name be by the maidens round about;
I shall cause no cheek to wither and no pretty lips to pout."

II.

While the mountain tops were rosy and with dew the grass was wet,
Thora hastened to the boat-house to repair the fishing-net;
Skipping, jumping, wild and wanton, danced she o'er the fields away,
Tossing to the sportive echoes many a bright and careless lay.

When the lads who boats were bailing heard the pretty Thora sing,
Joining hands they ran to meet her, throwing round the maid a ring.
"Now!" they cried, with boist'rous laughter; "now we've surely caught thee, Miss;
Thou canst only buy thy freedom if thou give us each a kiss."

"Come and take it, lads," cried Thora; "here's my mouth and here my hand.
Kiss, indeed! Why don't you take it? Modest, sooth, is your demand."
And when one stepped briskly forward, half emboldened by her speech,
With a slap she sent him spinning, like a top, upon the beach.

With a peal of mocking laughter off she bounded like a hind,
And her loosened yellow tresses fluttered gayly in the wind,
While the lad, abashed, bewildered, strolled away with burning ears
To compose his wounded feelings and escape his comrades' jeers.

Now a gallant lad was Halvor, who in storm and billows' roar
Oft had steered his skiff securely close beneath the rocky shore,
And the thought within him rankled with a dull and gnawing pain,
That a little maid had smote him whom he could not smite again.

And the dimpled face of Thora haunted him by night and day:
He was sure that he must love her, for his wrath had flown away:
Yet he could have sworn a little had not swearing been a sin—
Why should he thus love a maiden who was neither kith nor kin?

Strange to say, the little Thora, when her anger was at rest,
Found some queer, soft thought awaking dimly in her troubled breast:
"Had she not too harshly punished an offense not gravely meant?
Could she hope for God's forgiveness, who could rudely thus resent?

"As for kissing, that was foolish—that's to say, before a throng;
Yet in Scripture people did it, so it scarcely could be wrong.
Had he only been discreeter—met her 'neath the sinking sun—
Well, in sooth, there is no knowing what she might not then have done."

Thus with doubt and passion wrestling, and by vague regrets distraught,
Shyly nursing tender yearnings which she dared not frame in thought,
On the strand alone she wandered, where in whispered pulses beat,
Drunk with sleep, the mighty ocean, darkly heaving at her feet.

There it seemed—what odd illusion!—that her footsteps on the sand
Broke into a double rhythm, sharply echoing o'er the strand,
And she felt a shadowy presence in the moonlight, gaunt and dread,
Moving stealthily behind her, and she dared not turn her head.

Swiftly, wildly on she hurried by, and cloud and moon and star
With a dumb phantasmal ardor sped along th' horizon's bar;
Till exhausted, panting, sobbing and bewildered with alarm,
Scarce she fell ere she was lifted lightly on her lover's arm.

"Thora," said he, stooping o'er her, "pardon if I caused thee fright;
But my heart was full to bursting. Speak I must, and speak to-night.
Silence, Thora, is so heavy, like a load upon the breast;
Sooth, I think thou hast bewitched me; I can find nor peace nor rest."

Thora half-way stayed her weeping, and the moon which peeped askance
From behind her cloud revealed the tearful brightness of her glance.
"Oh, thou wouldst not love me," sobbed she, "if thou knew'st how bad I am—
Once—I hung—a great live lobster—on the tail of—Hans—our ram!"

Scarce I know how he consoled her; but ere long her tears were dried,
And 'twas rumored in the parish—though again it was denied—
That while all the moon was hidden—all except the golden tins—
There was heard a sound mysterious, as of softly meeting lips.

For the good wife, mildly grumbling at the idle spinning-wheel,
Rose at length and trudged sedately, anxious for the daughter's weal,
Over sand and stone and tangle, where the frightened plovers flew
Screaming seaward, and majestic skyward soared the silent mew.

And 'twas she who with amazement heard the soft, mysterious sound;
And 'tis said she shook and tottered, almost fainting on the ground.
Scarce her reason she recovered, if the wild report be true,
For she saw a queer-shaped figure, which proved later to be two.

"Daughter," said she, not ungently, "I have sought thee in alarm,
Fearing, in the treacherous moonlight, thou perchance had come to harm;
Yet I hoped that I should find thee, though the night be dark and drear,
Knowing that thou lov'st to wander where no prying men are near."

Dumb, abashed stood little Thora, and her cheeks were flaming red;
Nervously she twirled her apron, and she hung her pretty head,
Till at length she gathered courage and she whispered breathlessly:
"Mother dear, I love him truly, and he says that he loves me."

"Lord 'a' mercy on us, daughter!" solemnly the dame replied;
"I who have the maids invited that they might thy choice decide;
For of men there are so many—stout and slender, short and tall—
How's a maid to choose among them, since she can not love them all?"

Now, the moon, who had been hiding in a veil of misty lace,
Wishing to embarrass no one by the shining of her face,
Peeped again, in modest wonder, ere her cloud she gently broke,
And she saw the good wife smiling, as to Thora thus she spoke:

"Since thou now hast chosen, daughter—every bird must try his wings—
Tell me, how did't thou discover that thy heart to Halvor clings?"
"Well," she said, in sweet confusion, while her eyes grew big with tears,
"Thou wouldst scarcely—understand it—mother, dear—I boxed his ears."

—Hjalmar H. Boyesen, in Our Continent.

CAHLINE'S PA.

"Dat owdacious steah! 'Clar to de goodness a mussy it w'ars me out. Dis yer de fo'ty-milliumf time I dun druv him outen de cotton dis mawnin. Wot fo' Mos' Jawge 'low sich critters 'bout de plantation?"

"Wot fo' he 'low sich lazy nigga as you is 'bout de plantation? Tell me dat, yo' Ebenezer, yo'? Cl'ar dis minnit an' drub out dat steah. Don' you see him a-tromping in de millium patch? Who lef' dem bahs down? Whar dat clo'es paddle? Trabble now, ef yo' don' want fer ter feel it roun' yer sassy brack jaws! Don' talk ter me! Don' tell me yo' ain't a-saying nuffin! Don' I hear yo' a-sayin' yo' nuvver lef' dem bahs down? Git dat regenrit steah outen o' dem milliums, an' den come heah. Kase der's gwine to be a settle*ment*, an' yo' is agwine fer ter git wot yo' 'sarbs."

Aunt Docia stood in the door of her cabin, and glared savagely at Ebenezer, who glumly shuffled off to the melon patch on the hither side of the great cotton field, where an erratic steer was aimlessly promenading, to the serious detriment of the growing melons.

"'Pears like chillens gits mo' and mo' triflin', lazy, and regenrit de longer dey libs," Aunt Docia muttered, as she seized the clo'es paddle, and sallied out to meet the luckless Ebenezer, who, after driving the steer from among the melon vines, had started back to the cabin without replacing the bars that had been let down between the cabin garden and the cotton field.

Thwack, thwack, came the stinging paddle about Ebenezer's lightly clad lower extremities, and loud rose the basket-meetin' tones of Aunt Docia, as she rigorously exhorted the while she belabored the boy, who whined dismally in a mournful minor key as the blows fell thick and fast. "I heerd wot yo' sassed back, yo' regenrit riflebate! I heerd, ah!" shouted Aunt Docia, intoning her sentences like a trained ecclesiastic. "Yo' t'ink Aunt Docia got no yers, ah? An' blin' ob bofe eyes, ah? Yo' 'spec's she need fer ter t'ar a rail off de fence fer ter pick her yers open wid, duz yer? An' yo' 'low yo' kin blame off all yo' no 'count, lazy, triflin' meanness onter Cahline, an' sabe yo' black nigga hide, duz yo'? Cahline, eh? [Whack.] *Cahline!* [Whack, whack.] Blame it all off onter Cahline, eh? [Whack.] Cahline dun lef' de bars down, eh? [Whack.] Cahline dun tuhn de steah inter de cotton, eh? [Whack.] Cahline dun put yo' up ter tellin' dat big lie 'bout millium times yo' dun druv de steah out? Wot yo' know 'bout millium times? Wot fo' yo' kaint speak de bressid troof, eh? How many times yo' dun druv dat steah out, sah? Say de troof, sah. [Whack, whack, whack.] Oh! yo' jes dribe him out jes one time, eh? Aha! Now wot yo' s'pose yo' 'sarbs 'bout dem millium lies yo' dun tole? Yo' don' know? Yaas yo' duz know, sah. Yo' knows yo' 'sarbs de wustest cuttin' up yo' eber got in de whole ob yo' mawtil life. Dat wot yo' know. Stan'in' up dah, an' a-tellin' a whole millium lies 'bout one po' steah, an' a-blamin' de las' one onter yo' po' leetle seester! Yo' regenrit, owdacious, good-forsaken—"

How much more extended Aunt Docia's line of epithets might have become may not appear, for just at this moment Cahline herself rushed between Ebenezer and the incensed wielder of the clo'es paddle.

"Laws, mammy!" screamed the child, a slender, pretty mulatto girl about twelve years of age, "don't pay on dat a-way. De ole steah neber tromped on no millium; an' sho nuff I luff dem bahs down, kase pappy say he gwine fer ter come pay yo' a visit. Dat ar Ebenezer ain't no ways 'sarbin' sech a paddlin'."

"Dell law!" exclaimed Aunt Docia, her fury all gone, as she turned and viewed Cahline admiringly. "Wot a chile yo' is! Yo's de fo'gibbenist mawtil! Atter all dem millium lies, yo' stan's dar like a cl'ar angel an' begs fo' yo' po' denighted brudder wot ain't got de sense fer ter tank yo' fo' yo' intercedin'. Go 'long, yo'. Go 'long, Ebenezer, and tank yo' po' leetle sister dat yo' ain't got de onmussiful lammin' yo' hab richly 'sarbed."

And Ebenezer, still dismally whining, smarting all over from the blows of the relentless paddle, limped away to bewail his hapless lot, and to wish for the hundredth time that he had been born, as Cahline was, the child of the spruce young quadroon boy to whom, while he was yet a wee toddler, his mammy had been married with great display, the magnificence of which yet lingered in his memory as the one redeeming feature of the alliance. For from the day of the eventful wedding up to date poor Ebenezer's recollections of maternal coddlings were none, while his memories of paddlings, cuffings, lammings and cuttings up were manifold and mournful.

Aunt Docia's overweening admiration of her present husband—"Cahline's pa," as she delighted to style him—was only equalled by her cordial detestation of her first husband, "dat ar brack nigga Abram."

Perhaps she loved Ebenezer, her only child when Abram was carried off with a fit of cramp colic; but if she did, she never showed her love, save in vigorous exhortation, and still more vigorous application of the rod of correction. Certainly she made his life as miserable as the life of such an easy-going, good-natured, "happy-go-lucky" could well be.

There were occasions on which Ebenezer held the whip hand, as it were, and on these occasions the lad had wit enough to make his own terms with his tyrant.

Mos' Jawge, a most indulgent and, indeed, careless master, allowed his people to buy and sell and get gain according to their several abilities, so long as no flagrant offense against the very loosely-fitting code of morals of the Bersheimer Plantation came to light. Provided the grass was kept out of the cotton in growing season, and the average number of pounds picked each day during the picking, Mos' Jawge cared nothing at all about how many patches of truck his enterprising hands might cultivate after hours, or how many dozen fowls the women of the plantation might manage to raise.

The very young man who acted as overseer of Mos' Jawge's interests on the plantation was deeply interested in the Doctor's daughter, whose home was on a plantation seven miles distant, and four evenings out of the seven Mos' Rob spruced up and rode off to Dr. Atend's as soon as the day's work in the field was ended.

Then the men who had dragged lamely up and down the rows of cotton all day, as though their legs had been made of broom-straws, stiffened up amazingly as they thrust in the spade or swung the hoe upon their own bits of "gyaden;" and the women, hastening off to gather the eggs or to hunt out the stray nests, and drive up the young broods of turkeys, ducks and chickens, stepped with other and sprightlier feet than those which so listlessly had borne them along while doing the labor whose yield was all to be for the master.

Mos' Jawge indulged to some extent in stock-raising, and in the bit of grassy upland back of the plantation some passable cattle were accustomed to range. The plantation fences being not of the finest, and the uncles' corn patches often proving more tempting than the wild grass of the woods, the visits of the cattle were more frequent than agreeable to Ebenezer, whose special assignment of labor was to keep the stock out of the crop. Yet the duty was not altogether without accompanying pleasureable excitement. It afforded the boy many an opportunity. Pecan trees grew in the hollow beyond the swamp line; no power could prevent him from picking the ripe, fallen nuts from the thick grass beneath the grove when he drove the cattle to their grazing. If he stored and hid a bushel more or less, and sold some now and then to the travelers on the steamboats that in shipping-time stopped at Mos' Jawge's landing, who or what could hinder? If, moreover, in his frequent incursions into the thicket after the straying cattle, he came upon a stolen nest of some cunning fowl, who or what could prevent his making capital of the knowledge thus obtained, or of confiscating the eggs for that matter? Aunt Docia could not, surely, and when Ebenezer sometimes offered to tell her "a secrit" in consideration of so many rations of dodger an' 'lasses or roast 'possum, she had no alternative. Eggs were eggs, according to her creed, and whether it were Aunt Milly's speckled pullet that sat upon them or Aunt Rachel's dominecky that ran cackling away from the hidden nest, if it were Ebenezer that discovered them, and confided his discovery to her, it surely followed that the find was hers.

At such times Ebenezer made his own terms. Aunt Docia had found out long ago that no amount of "clo'es paddlin'," or even of lithe, stinging cane, could force from "dat onregenrit Ebenezer" the "secrit" that was his and only his.

"Oh laws, mammy!" the boy would whine, "no pusson caint tell secrits long as yo' a-cuttin' 'em up dat a-way. Dat ain't de way fer fin' out secrits. Oh, lawsey, lawsey!"

And Aunt Docia, in sheer despair, would give over beating the boy, and try a more winning way—the drumbone of a chicken, a cold sweet 'tater, or some dodger an 'lasses being the usual convincing argument.

This morning, when the steer invaded the melon patch, Aunt Docia had been in a peculiarly unamiable mood, owing to the fact that 'Lijah, the quadroon spouse, Cahline's pa, had failed to keep his promise made to her at the Sunday meeting, of visiting her on the following Wednesday. Of late months Cahline's pa had seemed to Aunt Docia changed. He sat glum and listless when he came to visit her, never praising her toothsomest dishes as before, and sometimes barely tasting her early roasting ears and fried chicken and most delectable egg custard, of which he was once so fond. She suspected him of having joined the Voudous, but her horror at the thought was so great that she did not dare even to hint her suspicions, but contented herself with accusing him of trying to get his freedom, and for answer he had angrily struck her a blow in the face.

He was but a slight, weakly fellow, seventeen years Aunt Docia's junior, and vastly her inferior in bodily strength, but he was a man—almost a white man, and Cahline's pa; so Docia restrained her wrath, pocketed the insult, and kept her ponderings to herself, taking care to wreak her surplus indignation upon poor Ebenezer.

Cahline's pa was the property of a planter who, as unlike Mos' Jawge as possible, managed his slaves on an adjoining plantation after the most rigid plantation fashion. They were accorded but few privileges, and for such as were permitted them they were required to pay, in advance at that, in some form of extra service. When, therefore, Cahline's pa obtained permission to visit Cahline's ma on the next plantation, it was always on condition. Failing to comply with that condition, the visit was forfeited, and not infrequently a penalty imposed.

On the morning in question Cahline had been sent by Aunt Docia with a *douceur* of fresh-laid eggs and half a roast 'possum to the overseer of the Cullum plantation, the home of 'Lijah, with a polite message for that functionary to the effect that a big turtle had been landed on his back in Aunt Docia's cabin, and the overseer would be welcome to some choice steaks if 'Lijah might be sent up to Mos' Jawge's to carry them. The overseer had, as Docia knew, a weakness for turtle steaks, and promised to see that 'Lijah was duly sent; and 'Lijah himself, chancing at the end of a row of cotton just as Cahline was making her exit from the field, called to the child, and whispered hurriedly to her to tell her ma to be on the look-out for a visitor "inside an hour."

"Laws, pappy, is yo' gwine fer ter leab de pickin'?" queried the child, with wide eyes.

"Go on out o' dis," answered 'Lijah, roughly, "an' leabe de bahs down, yo'." And accordingly Cahline had gone and left the bars down, in consequence of which Ebenezer had suffered.

Aunt Docia was radiant. "So yer pa is a-comin', is he, honey?" she said, turning approvingly to Cahline. "Did Mr. Spotts tole you he gwine ter send fo' de turtle?"

"No," answered Cahline; "he dun tole me hisself; an' he dat sour 'bout it. Dell law! I's skeered he gwine ter hit me a clip."

"Soho! bress de chile!" laughed Aunt Docia; "'Lijah a-hittin' yo' a clip! W'y, Cahline, yer pa'd no mo'—Laws gracious, dar he comes dis breavin' minnit! Wot in de goodniss—'Lijah!"

"Shet up, will ye?" grunted 'Lijah, flinging himself in at the low cabin door, and settling into the great splint rocker. "Gimme wot money ye got saved up, Docia, an' shake far'well, fer I's a-gwine, I is."

"Whar yo' gwine, 'Lijah?" "Whar yo' gwine, pa?" queried Docia and Cahline in one voice.

"I's gwine whar no pusson'll eber fin' me; dat's nuff," returned 'Lijah. "De Roun' Tower am a-gwine fer wood up at Dummett Landing dis yer night, an' ole mos' gwine fin' hisself one nigga short in de mawnin'—dat's me."

"Yo' is crazy, 'Lijah," said Docia, angrily. "Don' yo' got no sinsis? Dem steamboats don' carry runaway niggas."

"Sometimes dey duz," growled 'Lijah. "Dey kaint holp deyselves. Dis yer am one of dem times. I's cl'ar tired ob dis yer sub'tude. De kicks and de cusses wuz too 'boundin' dese yere las' days. I's done studied it all out, an' dis yere's de way: Dar's a great big hole in de hol', yer know, ob de Roun' Tower. 'Kase I seed it when I packed de sack o' bacon down dar dat ole mos' shipped to New Orleans to Mos' Josef. Down into dat hole I's gwine fer stumble like—jes makin' out, yo' know—dis yere night. An' dar I's gwine ter bunk till de boat lan's at Vicksbuhg. Den I slips up an' steals out, an' takes my chainces wid de wohl till I sees de chaince fer hide on some other boat fer New Orleans, an' den I gits onter a ship an' goes Norf. I's boun' fer ter git free, I is. So yo' kin git morried agin soon's yo' mind to, Docia. I ain't gwine pester ye no mo'. Wha' de money yo' done sabe up?"

Docia began to cry. "Yo' is de mos' unregenrit fool dat eber de Lawd let lib," she sobbed. "Dat ar Ebenezer, de chile of dat riflebate Abram, dun got mo' sinse dan yo' is. Wot yo' 'low Mos' Dummett an' Mos' Spotts gwine be doin' while yo' a-slippin' down holes an' a-stealin' off to Vicksbuhg? Wot dem houn's gwine fer be doin'? Don' yo' know yo'll git cotch, an' tied to de tree, an' flogged nigh 'bout ter death? Haven't yo' got no 'fection fer yer wife an' chile, 'Lijah, dat yo' goes off dis yer way, a-leabin' 'em to pine away an' die? Don' ye know wot ye wuz when Aunt Docia tuk ye up an' morried ye? Who's a-gwine fer ter roas' 'possum an' fry chicken an' sweet 'tater fer ye up yander in de Norf—eh? Dat wot been a-sourin' on yer stummick all dis yer w'ile, eh, t'inkin' 'bout sech foolishness? Gib it up, 'Lijah; dar ain't nuffin but misery in no sech. Come, eat a hunk o' water-millium an' cool ye off," she added, coaxingly, as she turned to the cupboard where she had stored her precious melon.

"Git dat money, will yo'?" growled 'Lijah. "An' shet up; I's gwine ter leabe, an' dat's nuff. Yo' kin marry agin—didn't I tole yo'?"

Ebenezer's hour had come. He had been crouching behind the mud chimney, nursing his aching limbs and crying dumbly, ever since Docia had released him. Through an open chink in the wall he had both seen and heard Cahline's pa. With a strange boldness he now came into the cabin, and facing the quadroon, piped out, in shrill tones:

"I knowed it—I knowed it. Eber sense yaller Nelly done run away, an' neber got cotch, Cahline's pa he been studyin' 'bout wot she tole him de night 'fo' she leabe. She done hidin' in de swamp when Ebenezer saachin' fo' de mooly cow dat got los'. I seed her, an' I seed yo' too. An' I heerd as how yo' lub her tousan' millium times mo'n yo' lub ole Mom Docie, an' how yo' gwine cut an' run after her jes' as sho' as de hunt died down, an' nobody was a-s'picionin'. I heerd her tell yo' 'bout dat trippin' inter de hole ob de staamboat an' playin' 'possum like till yo' gets away far off, an' den leggin' it for de Norf. Say she gwine ter fetch up in Sensenatty, an' she'll morry yo' when came 'long. Dat de sollum truf, mammy. Cahline's pa kaint noways deny it, 'kase I done heerd it with my yers. Dat whar I 'l'arn dat ar 'bout millium times. Dat de very wuhd he say to yaller Nelly—lub her millium times mo' dan he eber lub ole Mom Docie."

"Yo' nasty, sneakin' pup," began 'Lijah, rising from the splint chair and advancing threateningly toward Ebenezer; "I'll teach yo' fo' spy roun' atter me; I'll—"

But it was not permitted to Cahline's pa to teach—not that time. To him it was appointed to learn. And he learned to his dismay how powerful a woman's arm may become when nerved by outraged love and wounded pride.

"Wha' dat clo'es paddle?" ejaculated Docia, in tones of direst portent. "Stan' away from dat, Ebenezer," she cried, warningly, as with one supreme whack across 'Lijah's shins she brought to the ground the object of her stung heart's adoration. Thick and fast fell the blows, every one well and truly aimed, and though Cahline's pa endeavored to defend himself, calling wildly upon Cahline and Ebenezer to come to his assistance, and striking out with both arms and legs, his efforts were of no avail. The air seemed filled with clothes paddles, and every separate paddle fell with separate and stinging distinctness upon some portion of the prostrate 'Lijah.

"Gib yo' my money, eh? For yo' to go a-taggin' atter yaller Nelly, hey? Oh, yes! I gibs yo' all yo' 'sarbs; I gibs yo' mo'n yo' axes fo'—I gibs yo' a lesson, I duz; I larns yo' how to go rollin' down steamboat holes, a-stealin' away from yo' honnist mostah an' yo' wife an' chile. Yo' lazy, triflin', no-'count, white-livered, no-nation nigga dog! Take dat money—an' dat—an' dat!" Each *dat* emphasized by a more stinging blow of the paddle.

When at length, her fury spent, Aunt Docia sank into the splint-bottomed rocker, she spurned with her foot the luckless quadroon, who writhed away from her presence, and made the best of his way back to his cotton-picking, where he received a dozen hearty lashes from the overseer for not bringing with him the expected turtle.

"Ebenezer," said Aunt Docia, yet panting from her late exertions, "take dat clo'es paddle an' chop it inter kin-lin's. I has done my duty by it, an' wedder dat pusson dat hab jes' lef' us foller atter his ebil designin's, a-trompin' atter yaller Nelly, or wedder he retuhns to his 'sulted fambly—dat, praise de Lawd! kin git on pufflckly well widout no sich—dere ain't no mo' virtue in dat yer paddle. It done busted."

"Wot yo' gwine for ter whoop Ebenezer wid, mammy, w'en de clo'es paddle done chopped up?" asked the boy, shiveringly, half scared out of his senses by the unusual performance.

"I washes my han's ob yo', Ebenezer, forebermo'," answered Aunt Docia, solemnly. "Duz yer 'sposen I'd dirty 'em a-kerreckin' de regen'rit chile of dat brack nigga Abram, atter I has onst put em' to de solemn jewty ob dribin' ebil 'pensities outen ob Cahline's pa?"

From that hour Ebenezer went free of all maternal discipline. 'Lijah did not run away after the remarkable programme he had laid down, but, on the contrary, returned meek and amiable to his capable spouse, who, after being suitably mollified, forgave him and received him again into favor.

And Ebenezer, searching after and driving in straying cows, or driving out straying steers, never failed to chuckle audibly as he passed the swamp where once he had overheerd the conversation whose apt report had served to change the daily experience of his life. "Lawsey! lawsey!" he would chuckle; "sense dat day I ain't got no grudge laid up agin de poor critter. 'Kase I's just 'bout millium times better off, 'count ob dat bustid clo'es paddle an' Cahline's pa."—*Mary E. C. Wyeth, in Harper's Bazar.*

A Fable.

A Lobster who had, by years of patient toil and careful economy, accumulated a snug sum of money, cast about him to see how he could use it to deserve the gratitude of the public. He first consulted the Clam, and that Bivalve solemnly puckered his mouth and said:

"Good idea, my friend, good idea. You can't do better than to leave your money to found a school of philosophy for Clams. We'll take it and keep your memory green for a thousand years."

The Fox was next consulted, and he slapped the Lobster on the back and cried out:

"That's the ticket, old man—leave that cash to the Foxes! What we want to make us happy is a dictionary and an eye-glass for each Fox."

The Peacock was found at home, and when the subject was broached she laid her hand on her heart and said:

"Old Lob, your head is level. Leave that money to the Peacocks, and in less, than six months we'll show you seven new styles of gracefully avoiding a spotted cow in the highway. Give us that cash and we shall want for nothing more."

The Codfish was found posting up his account books, and when informed of the Lobster's mission he laid down his pen and replied:

"You have come to the right adviser, my friend. It is needless to inform you that for the last hundred years the Cod has had to stay under the water most of the time on account of having no fit clothes to appear on shore. With that money we can rag out with the best, hold our heads with the highest, and we will no longer be quoted in market at a lower figure than rusty pork and stringy beef."

The Lion wanted the money given to the feline race so that it might buy its potatoes and cabbage in open market, nstead of stealing them.

The Buzzard didn't want to seem avaricious at all, but he had long thought that some philanthropist would make a great hit by leaving a fund to provide Buzzards with glass eyes and toothache remedies.

Bewildered and discouraged by his interviews, the Lobster at last appealed to the Owl for a candid opinion.

"Well, if I had a pile of money and wanted to do something to please the public," replied the Owl, "I'd whack up with my poor relations and pay up my outlawed debts."

MORAL.

But they never do.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Minnie Hauck's Dog.

As Miss Minnie Hauck, the singer, who arrived in New York from Europe yesterday, was leaving the steamship pier, her dog, a pretty poodle, was stopped by a Custom House Inspector: "You can not take the dog along yet, Madam. You will have to wait until the declarations are made out." "Why?" "I must find out if that dog is on the list." Several of the gentlemen remonstrated. Mr. Smith E. Lane, the Park Commissioner, said: "Why, you don't want the ladies to wait in the rain on account of the dog?" The Inspector insisted, but Mme. Hauck, who led the dog by a string, slipped it from his collar, blew a silver whistle, and the dog started off at full speed, and was soon out of sight. "He is a Yankee," she said, "and is only returning to his native land."—*New York Dispatch.*

—A fact probably but little known is that the United States nickel five-cent piece furnishes a key to metric measures and weights. This coin is two centimeters in diameter and its weight is five grammes. Five of them placed in a row will give the length of a decimeter, and two of them will weigh a decagramme. As a kiloliter is a cubic meter, the key of the measure is also the key to a measure of capacity.—*N. Y. Times.*

What Napoleon Ate.

The supply of fresh provisions was derived from Brazil and the Cape of Good Hope, and as the sheep and cattle had to endure a long voyage, they arrived at St. Helena lean and out of order and never fattened after landing, as the island furnished no means of restoring them to condition. The flesh was invariably tasteless, sometimes even quite unwholesome. St. Helena furnished no game. A few red partridges and pheasants arrived twice or thrice a year. Chinese pigs alone arrived fat and lively, and M. Chandeller reports favorably of them. He says that their flesh was delicious, and that it gave him infinite pleasure to prepare pork griskins, sausages and black pudding, of all of which Napoleon was very fond. Fish was scarce, none of the European kinds visiting the island. Oysters, crabs, lobsters or any kind of shell-fish were not to be had. Only two kinds of fish were at all tolerable; one is what the French called the "bonne femme," and the other, which is long, like an eel, but not thicker than the little finger, is called the needle fish. The only fruit of any value was the banana. This he utilized in fritters or iced with rum. The climate was so variable that neither citron nor oranges could ripen; grapes and apricots never come to maturity; apples, pears and peaches were as bad.

Napoleon's breakfast consisted of sorrel pottage, or any other refreshing pottage, breasts of mutton boned and well grilled, served with a clear gravy, a roast chicken or two griskins and sometimes a plate of pulse. For dinner he had a pottage, a remove, two entrees, a roast and two side dishes of sweetmeats or pastry, of which he was very fond. This was always served on plate. The removes used to puzzle M. Chandeller, for he often had nothing for the purpose but large pieces of beef, mutton or fresh pork, with sometimes (by a happy chance) a goose, a turkey or a suckling pig. Madeira, Teneriffe and Constantia were the wines supplied to the suite of the Emperor. His own drink was claret, and of that he drank very moderately.

Napoleon's cook is particular to record in these "Reminiscences" what dishes his master preferred. Roasted fowls, pullets minced "a la Marengo," "a l'Italienne," "a la Provencale," without garlic, fricasseed fowls sometimes done in champagne, which was very dear on the island, as much as twenty shillings a bottle. He liked puddings "a la Richelieu;" but above all, he preferred sweet things and pastry, such as "vols-au-vent," "petites bouchess a la reine" and little cakes of macaroni prepared in various ways. The cook was unable (he relates with much sorrow) to make these as good as he ought, because the macaroni, though sent from Naples, grew stale on the passage, as did the Parmesan. As Napoleon's health grew worse he was more difficult to please, and poor M. Chandeller found his skill and ingenuity taxed to do this.—*N. O. Times-Democrat.*

De Lesseps' Duplicity.

M. De Lesseps deceived Arabi Pasha. It was in that way the Suez Canal was saved. "I fortified Kafr-el-Dwar," says the Egyptian patriot, in his interview with the New York *World's* Alexandria correspondent, "and waited for the British, and thinking that they might seize the canal, determined to blow it up in three or four places, and thus make it useless. I went there with the engineers and materials for the purpose, when that villain, De Lesseps, swore by all that was holy and sacred, even by the light of his eyes and the lives of his children, that if England touched the canal France, Russia and Italy would prevent her by force of arms, and showed me false telegrams to that effect purporting to be from the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, and even copies of the notices the French, Russian and Italian Admirals then at Port Said were supposed to have served on the British Admiral, warning him against entering the canal at his peril. I had always been on friendly terms with De Lesseps, and I was foolish enough to believe him, although my advisers, and especially M. Ninet, who knew him well, insisted upon the destruction of the canal, the latter saying that having known Lesseps personally for forty-five years he would not trust him one para. One morning while we were watching the enemy at Kafr-el-Dwar, news came that the English had occupied the canal, and before we could get troops down there they landed in force. As I have said before, this canal is the curse of the country, and now it was the ruin of all my plans. I was forced to divide my army and oppose the British advance upon Cairo from Ismailia. The Egyptians are not trained soldiers, and in resisting as much as they did they surpassed my expectations. I was cut off from communicating with the Sultan and the outer world, and by my last Constantinople instructions the Sultan assured me that the Turkish troops would soon land, and that I was to oppose the least British advance. I, therefore, lived in hopes of the Ottoman troops arriving any day to put an end to the strife."

Overfed Pigs.

When young pigs are sick it may be pretty certainly understood that they have been overfed. The general treatment of pigs seems to be based upon the idea that they are naturally greedy and gluttonous animals, and that this habit should be encouraged as much as possible. Hence all the diseases which so frequently affect pigs. When young a pig is a tender animal, with a stomach not much larger than that of a human infant about as old, and yet people will cram the little creature with sour slop, grease, milk, and corn meal until it can swallow no more. And when the pig is sick one wonders what is the matter. We do not feed lambs or calves, or colts, in that fashion, hence these are rarely diseased. Cough and difficulty of breathing is caused by indigestion, and the common disease of which partial paralysis of the hind parts is the chief sympton, and which is cerebrespinal meningitis, is caused by indigestion and malnutrition, which cause disturbance of the circulation and congestion of the brain and spinal marrow, with loss of nervous power. The treatment is to give a dose of salts and one scruple of saltpeter daily afterward, and feed very sparingly.—*Dublin Farmer's Gazette.*